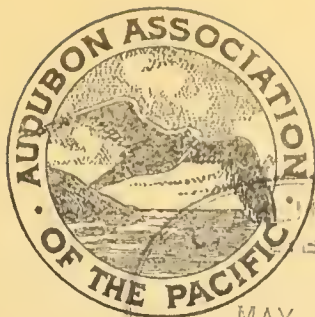


M&O
Serials
QL 671
.G84

THE

MONTHLY



GULL

LETTER
BULLETIN

MAY 7 - 1938

VOLUME 20

SAN FRANCISCO, MAY 1938

NUMBER 5

Parasitic Actions of a Ring-billed Gull

While watching Long-billed Curlews feeding on the mud flats toward the end of Tomales Bay I noticed a gull frequently annoying a curlew. As the distance from the top of the bluff to the flat was considerable I could not see just what was happening although it did appear as if the gull were trying to obtain the food which the curlew had brought up from the mud. Later in the afternoon, when returning along Sears Point cut-off, I saw a dozen or more Long-billed Curlews together with a few Hudsonian Curlews and other waders feeding close by. There was one Ring-billed Gull in their midst.

This gull kept an eye on all the curlews and when a Long-billed Curlew pulled a small clam from the mud it would glide over the back of the bird and force it to drop the tempting morsel. The gull had time for this action because the curlew carried its food to shallow water to rinse off the mud preparatory to swallowing it. It was interesting to note the smoothness of the whole operation. When a curlew brought a clam to the surface the gull rose and glided backward over the curlew. There was no protest from the curlew, it seeming to be only too glad to escape without injury to itself, by surrendering its food. Sometimes the gull missed because the curlew swallowed the clam before the gull could maneuver itself into the exact position directly over the back of the curlew. Although I did not see the gull peck a curlew, it could easily have done so from its position over the back of the bird with its bill close to the neck.

The gull would swallow the food hastily and settle down quietly awaiting its next chance. I watched the bird for half an hour and marveled that it knew what the curlews behind it were doing. The best score was three successful pilferings in succession.

Junea W. Kelly, Alameda, California. March 20, 1938.



April Field Trip

Sunday, April 24th, we took our regular trip to the Lake Merced region. Light showers greeted the party, but they soon cleared to leave a fine, sunny day. Since we were honored by the presence of the San Jose Audubon Society, it was unfortunate that the conditions at the lake were so poor. High water and shoreline road-building have played sad havoc with birding.

A new route was tried with a fair degree of success. In the canyon leading to the head of the smaller lake we found birds in goodly numbers. A Russet-backed Thrush announced his presence by his characteristic notes and proved to be the first of the season for many in the party. A Sharp-shinned Hawk and Mourning Doves flying over provided welcome breaks in the observations of the more common species, such as: Willow Goldfinch, Allen Hummingbird, Nuttall

Sparrow and Pileolated Warbler. In the open cultivated fields on the flats Savannah Sparrows and Horned Larks were noted.

We arrived at the lake proper amid a chorus of Tule Wren songs punctuated now and again by that of the Yellow-throat. Several families of Mallards ranging up to eleven in number and to about three weeks in age were noted. A Bittern was heard pumping among the tules that border the lake. After a vain wait for rails to put in an appearance we cut across to the head of the larger lake and to our luncheon place at the Broderick-Terry dueling grounds. In a flooded bit of kale patch nearby we had a truly wonderful opportunity to compare a Killdeer with the smaller Semipalmated Plover. Seven of the latter were present as well as several Western Sandpipers in beautiful plumage. It is regrettable that the only bit of shore line suited to the needs of shore birds should be this little temporary stretch of vegetable garden. A pair of Ravens and four Turkey Vultures flying over proved welcome additions to our growing list, as did a beautiful, but elusive, Yellow Warbler singing in a willow thicket.

The party began dispersing shortly after luncheon, which was most unfortunate in that two of the best observations of the day were made after many had left. An Anthony Green Heron was flushed from the willows along the lake and a Western Kingbird was found on the flats near where our first observations had been made.

A total of fifty-eight species for the day was obtained, a good average list for the area. Five species noted the previous day: Farallon Cormorant, Red-breasted Merganser, Red-tailed Hawk, Cedar Waxwing and Audubon Warbler, and two species noted the following day, Long-billed Dowitcher and Brown Creeper, were not found on the day of the trip.

Eared Grebe	Allen Hummingbird	Russet-backed Thrush
Western Grebe	Red-shafted Flicker	Hutton Vireo
Pied-billed Grebe	Arkansas Kingbird	Yellow Warbler
Anthony Green Heron	Black Phoebe	Yellow-throat
American Bittern	Western Flycatcher	Pileolated Warbler
Mallard	Horned Lark	English Sparrow
Ruddy Duck	Rough-winged Swallow	Western Meadowlark
Turkey Vulture	Barn Swallow	Red-wing Blackbird
Sharp-shinned Hawk	Cliff Swallow	Brewer Blackbird
Sparrow Hawk	Bank Swallow	Purple Finch
Quail	California Jay	House Finch
American Coot	Raven	Pine Siskin
Semipalmated Plover	Barlow Chickadee	Willow Goldfinch
Killdeer	Coast Bush-tit	Green-backed Goldfinch
Western Sandpiper	Wren-tit	San Francisco Towhee
Glaucous-winged Gull	House Wren	Savannah Sparrow
Western Gull	Vigors Wren	Junco
California Gull	Tule Wren	Nuttall Sparrow
Mourning Dove	Western Robin	Song Sparrow
Anna Hummingbird		

Sixteen members attended the trip, as follows: Mesdames Kelly, Saunders; Misses Blake, Cohen, Danz, MacIver, Taylor, Werner; Messrs. Bolander, Bremer, Chase, Kirker, Power, Webb; Mr. and Mrs. Stephens; with eleven members of the San Jose Audubon Society, namely: Mrs. Perry; Misses Emily Smith, Paulus, Georgia and Emma Miller, Kersell, Wood, Henry, Lull, Armistead, and Jim Strimpel. Other guests were: Mrs. Charlotte C. Welcomb of Springfield, Vermont, Miss Diana de Jager of New York City, Mrs. Deuprey, and Misses Swanson and Bellman, a total of sixteen guests.

Gordon Bolander, Leader and Historian.

Observations

Mrs. Mary L. Courtright: Larkspur, Golden-crowned Kinglet, April 19th (late).

Gordon Bolander: Lake Merced, four Ravens, Wilson Snipe, House Wren, Rough-winged Swallow, March 30th; Western Flycatcher, Lincoln Sparrow, April 1st; one Osprey, six Red-tailed Hawks, seventeen Sharp-shinned Hawks, eight Cooper Hawks, four sparrow Hawks, three Turkey Vultures, Western Gnatcatcher, Red-throated Loon, Varied Thrush, 7th; Red-breasted Nuthatch, Townsend Warbler, Barlow Chickadee nesting, Red-shafted Flicker nesting, 14th.

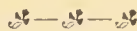
Mrs. Junea W. Kelly: Wildcat Canyon, Berkeley, Pileolated Warbler, March 30th; Durant Park, Oakland, Varied Thrush, Red-breasted Sapsucker, Cedar Waxwing, March 27th; Land's End, San Francisco, twelve Surf-birds, fifteen Black Turnstones, Brandt Cormorant, Red-throated Loon, March 26th; Bay Farm Island, fifty Hudsonian Curlews and flocks of Long-billed Dowitchers, March 31st; Alameda and Bay Farm Island, Black-bellied Plovers in fine plumage, and fifteen Knots, April 2nd; San Mateo Bridge, Long-billed Curlews, many Forster Terns, large flocks of Marbled Godwits. Semipalmated Plovers, six Ruddy Turnstones, April 24th; Radio Station, Bay Farm Island, thousands of Western Sandpipers, hundreds of Long-billed Dowitchers in fine plumage, many Black-bellied and Semipalmated Plovers, Hudsonian Curlew, Marbled Godwit, Willets, April 24th.

Harold Kirker: Lake Merced, Bullock Oriole, male and female, San Francisco Beach, thirteen Hudsonian Curlews, April 30th.

Commander Parmenter: Tomales Bay, Russet-backed Thrush, Black Brant 2000±; Bodega Bay, 400 Black Brant, thirty-five Long-billed Dowitchers, April 5th; Olema, Rough-winged Swallows, Pileolated Warbler, April 5th; Sears Point Cut-off, one White Pelican, twenty-one Black Brant, two Green Winged Teal, one Short-eared Owl, April 11th; Alvarado, ten Avocets, April 7th; Dumbarton Bridge, 100± American Golden-eyes, one Short-eared Owl, March 17th; 200± Long-billed Dowitchers, 100± Caspian Terns, April 7th; Lake Merced, Bank Swallows carrying nesting material, April 13th; Green Valley Falls Canyon, Olive-sided Flycatcher, April 11th; Great Highway, San Francisco, Crow, April 13th.

Mrs. Stephens: Lake Merced, two Ravens, March 20th, one female American Golden-eye, April 16th; Golden Gate Park, Western Flycatcher, Anthony Green Heron, April 16th; Marsh Creek Road, Mockingbird, April 10th; Livermore, many Lewis Woodpeckers, Bullock Oriole, April 10th; Lake Merced, seven Long-billed Dowitchers, two Killdeer, April 16th; Green Valley Falls, many Cassin and Warbling Vireos, Black-headed Grosbeak, Creeper, April 17th.

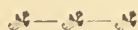
Miss Selma Werner: Manzanita, Lutescent, Pileolated and Black-throated Gray Warblers, April 13th.



May Meeting: The regular meeting will be held on Thursday evening, the 12th, at 8 o'clock, in room 19, Ferry Building.

The speaker of the evening will be Mr. Joseph Dixon, whose subject will be "Wildlife Conference of 1938."

Members may bring guests.

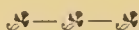


Directors' Meeting: There will be a meeting of the Directors at 7:30 p. m. in room 19, Ferry Building.



May Field Trip will be taken on Sunday, the 15th, to Saint Mary's, Contra Costa County. San Francisco members will take 8 a. m. Key Route Ferry and Sacramento Northern Railway train. East Bay members may take train at

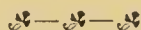
Fortieth Street and Shafter Avenue at 8:30 a. m. Purchase round-trip ticket to Saint Mary's; fare from San Francisco, 75c; from Oakland, 50c. Bring luncheon. Leader, Mr. Joseph J. Webb.



April Meeting: The 248th regular meeting was held on the 14th, in room 19, Ferry Building, with thirty-four members and guests present. Mr. B. K. Dunshee, First Vice-President, presiding.

Mr. Laidlaw O. Williams of Carmel gave the Association a most interesting talk on his trip across the continent to see Gannets on the North Atlantic Coast. He visited Yellowstone Park, where his chief objective was Trumpeter Swans. The most interesting thing to him in the city of Detroit were the night Hawks he heard from the twenty-second story of the hotel where he stayed. In Ontario he found flocks of Starlings that were developing a north and south migration drift. He made pilgrimages to birdmen as well as birds, and was cordially received by Fleming in Ontario and Taverner at Ottawa.

In Boston he attended a meeting of the Nuttall Club at the home of Professor Saunders. Mr. Williams gathered from early boyhood reading that it was next to impossible to see Gannets in their breeding places. However, on the Gaspé Peninsula and at Bonaventure he saw them in great numbers, taking photographs of hundreds on the rocks and close-ups of adults and young. He said that there were only thirteen breeding places now known for Gannets. He showed slides made from these photographs.



Birds of Marin County. The Association still has on hand quite a number of this valuable and conveniently arranged little pamphlet. We are anxious to recover the cost of printing them at least. If you or some bird-minded acquaintance can make use of a copy, it can be obtained at any regular meeting, price 25 cents.



Dues for 1938: The dues for the year 1938 were due and payable January 1st. Members who have not paid but wish to continue their membership and receive THE GULL are earnestly requested to remit as soon as possible or at least to declare their intention, thus saving postage to the Association and much time to the Treasurer. The Association values the support of every member.



Observations: Members are requested to bring their records in writing and leave copy with the editor. Early and late dates and unusual observations are especially wanted. Kindly arrange them in the following order: name of bird, place where seen, and date.

Audubon Association of the Pacific

Organized January 25, 1917

For the Study and the Protection of Birds

President.....Mrs. G. Earle Kelly..... 1311 Grand St., Alameda, Calif.
Corresponding Secretary.....C. B. Lastreto.....260 California St., San Francisco
Treasurer.....Mrs. A. B. Stephens.....1695 Filbert St., San Francisco

Monthly meeting second Thursday, 8 P. M., Room 19, Ferry Building.

Address Bulletin correspondence to Mrs. A. B. Stephens, Editor, 1695 Filbert St., San Francisco.

Membership dues, payable January 1st, \$3.00 per year.

Student memberships, \$1.50 per year.

Life memberships, \$50.00.

Members are responsible for dues until written notice of resignation is received by Treasurer.